

### Introductory notes

- These examples come from an elicitation session with Margaret
- **My overall goal** for these elicitations was to see what happens to verbs and nouns in relational constructions, which contain a possessor: For example, 'He sees a house vs. 'He sees **their** houses'
- I'm interested in marking for animacy, number, and obviation.
  - For this session, I focused on the verb **Waapihtim** 'S/he sees it (inanimate)', the possessor **naapaau** 'man', and the noun **waaskaahiikin** 'house'
  - I also focused on the verb **Utinaau** 'S/he takes it (animate)', the possessor **naapaau** 'man', and the noun **nimaas** 'fish'
  - **Time stamps** next to examples indicate where Margaret's pronunciation can be found in audio file REH1-021.
  - **Transcriptions** are in the Northern East Cree roman orthography style found on eastcree.org
- Margaret and I worked our way through a series of pictures that I created using clip art. I showed her a picture and asked her how to say things related to that picture. The pictures are included in this file.

**A note on the word <waaskaahiikin>**: I wanted to use this noun because of its phonological shape, which lets a prefix and a suffix be heard clearly. However, it's not always the best choice of word for 'house', because possession of a house implies that it's someone's *home*. Margaret commented a few times that <wiich> (see 02:00, for example), which the dictionary translates as 'dwelling', is a more appropriate word for 'home'. Therefore, to keep using the word <waaskaahiikin> we considered scenarios where people own houses that are not their homes, as people who sell real estate do.

- My pronunciations of <waaskaahiikin> are also really bad ... I need more practice. For one, I keep stressing the wrong syllable. But in the openness of the scientific spirit, I will not censor these embarrassing forms. Have fun laughing.

### Picture 1: A picture of a man looking at one house

Waapihtim waaskaahiikiniyu  
'He sees a house' (00:46)

Waapihtim aniyaa waaskaahiikiniyu  
'He sees that house' (01:01)

- Here the demonstrative modifies the object 'house', and the demonstrative and noun both agree in obviation. <aniyaa> is for inanimate singular obviatives.

Waapihtim uwaaskaahiikinim  
'He sees his (own) house' (02:25)

Waapihtim aniyaa uwaaskaahiikinim

'He sees his (own) (that) house' (02:36)

- 'his house' is specified here
- The demonstrative is the overt signal that <uwaaskaahiikinim> is obviative, because the noun does not carry the obviative suffix *-yiu*
- This example also shows that a demonstrative can modify a possessee, when the verb is not a relational form

**Picture 2:** A picture of a man looking at one house with one man

Waapihtimwaau uwaaskaahiikinimiyiu

'He sees his house' (03:45)

- Here the relational form appears on the verb: w + aau. This is because the sentence now includes an additional third-person, the possessor of the house.
- The stress is not final on <uwaaskaahiikinimiyiu>

Waapihtimwaau aniyaa uwaaskaahiikinimiyiu

'He sees his (that) house' (04:13)

- Here there is no issue with using a demonstrative to specify the possession 'his house'. The demonstrative clearly refers to the house and not the possessor 'him/his' because it takes the inanimate form

Waapihtimwaau napaauh uwaaskaahiikinimiyiu

'He sees the man's house' (05:20)

- This example includes the overt possessor

Waapihtimwaau aniyaah napaauh uwaaskaahiikinimiyiu

'He sees that man's house' (04:49)

- Here it is OK to include the overt possessor and to specify it with a demonstrative.

\*? Waapihtimwaau napaauh aniyaa uwaaskaahiikinimiyiu

'He sees the man's (that) house' (05:41)

- Here I tried to see if you can specify the possessee in a construction with the overt possessor. This is definitely a much less acceptable type of construction than the ones so far with this picture.
- Margaret says this kind of form is "not really good, but we can say that" (06:15). So a speaker can say this kind of thing, but it is obviously much less acceptable than the version without the demonstrative specifying 'his house'. And it's clearly much less acceptable than the version with the demonstrative specifying the overt possessor (see above). Margaret confirms this analysis when I ask her (06:48).

**Picture 3:** A picture of a man looking at two houses with one man (19:48)

Waapihtim waaskaahiikinh

'He sees the houses' (20:16)

Waapihtim aniyaah waaskaahiikinh

'He sees those houses' (20:34)

Waapihtim uwaaskaahiikinimh

'He sees his (own) houses' (21:22)

Waapihtim aniyaah uwaaskaahiikinimh

'He sees his (own) (those) houses' (22:08)

- Specifying the possessee is OK—no relational morphology here.

Waapihtimwaau aniyaah uwaaskaahiikinimiyuh

'He sees his (those) houses' (22:34)

- Specifying the possessee is OK—relational form with no overt possessor

Waapihtimwaau naapauh uwaaskaahiikinimiyuh

'He sees the man's houses' (24:02)

Waapihtimwaau aniyaah naapauh uwaaskaahiikinimiyuh

'He sees that man's houses' (23:26)

- Specifying the possessor

\*? Waapihtimwaau naapauh aniyaah uwaaskaahiikinimiyuh

- Trying to specify the possessee in the presence of an overt possessor is "not really good" (25:19). Again, Margaret indicates that it's possible but not a preferred construction.

**Picture 4:** A picture of a man looking at one house with two men (07:21)

uwaaskaahiikinimiwaau

'Their house' (08:15)

- Here the suffix *-iwaau* appears on the noun to indicate the plural possessor. The noun is not overtly marked obviative because the possessor is proximate.

'He sees their house'

- Asking for this example caused a bit of difficulty (08:53): Margaret started to say Waapihtimwaau uwaaskaahiikinimiwaa ... and then stopped before finishing the word and laughed a bit (08:56).
- Then she said <Waapihtimwaau uwaaskaahiikinimi**waayiu**> (09:05), which has the third-person possessor suffix (in bold) occurring before the obviative suffix. This seems to go against the template posited by Collette (2014), which I believe would predict the following template for the East Cree noun:

u-waaskaahiikin-yiu-waau-(suffix4)

### 3-house-OBV.POSS-PL.POSS-(suffix4)

- Then she produced a different word using the word <wiich> 'home/dwelling', which seems more familiar in these kinds of contexts. I think she produces the inflected form <wiichiwaayiu> 'their house', which seems to me to have the third-person possessor suffix occurring before the obviative suffix. I'm not sure which form exactly she produced, so I re-framed my elicitation a bit and asked again.
- Margaret responds again with <Waapihtimwaau uwaaskaahiikinimi**wa**ayiu> (09:45). I asked her if that sounded OK, and she said yes (10:34).
- I then asked her if we could say <Waapihtimwaau uwaaskaahiikinimi**yu****waau**> (10:15), where I put the suffixed in the positions that I think are posited by Collette (2014). She said "no".
- But Margaret explicitly said that <wiichiwaayiu> 'their house' "is better" (10:41). I'm not sure I'm spelling it right, but it seems like the possessor suffix is again preceding the obviative possessor suffix.

Waapihtimwaau aniyaa uwaaskaahiikinimiwaayiu

'He sees their house' (11:49)

- Here Margaret says it's OK to specify the possessee with the obviative demonstrative. The demonstrative is the inanimate obviative singular form, with no /h/.

Waapihtimwaau naapauh uwaaskaahiikinimiwaayiu

'He sees the man's house' (13:04)

- Margaret says it's OK

Waapihtimwaau aniyaah naapauh uwaaskaahiikinimiwaayiu

'He sees those men's house' (12:33)

- Here the obviative possessor is specified.

\*Waapihtimwaau naapauh aniyaa uwaaskaahiikinimiwaayiu

'He sees the man's (that) house'

- Here I tried to specify the possessee in the presence of the overt possessor (13:37)
- Margaret thought about it and said "it's not really good" (14:00)

**Picture 5:** A picture of a man looking at two houses with two men

Uwaaskaahiikinimiwaauh

'their houses' (14:43)

- Here the inanimate plural -h appears on 'house'

Waapihtimwaau uwaaskaahiikinimiwaayiu

'He sees their houses' (15:14)

- Again with uwaaskaahiikinimi**wa**ayiu

Waapihtimwaau aniyaah uwaaskaahiikinimiwaayih  
'He sees their houses' (15:51)

- Here the possessee is specified, without an overt possessor

Waapihtimwaau naapauh uwaaskaahiikinimiwaayih  
'He sees those men's houses' (17:30)

- Overt possessor present

Waapihtimwaau aniyaah naapauh uwaaskaahiikinimiwaayih  
'He sees those men's houses' (17:08)

- Possessor is specified

\*? Waapihtimwaau naapauh aniyaah uwaaskaahiikinimiwaayih

Again, trying to specify the possessee in the presence of the overt possessor is "not really good" (18:11)

Waapihtimwaau (aniyaah) naapauh uwaaskaahiikinimiyauih  
'He sees (those) men's houses'

- Margaret offered this form with "We can say too" (18:28), says it "means the same" as <Waapihtimwaau (aniyaah) naapauh uwaaskaahiikinimi*wa*ayih>
- So here the marking has changed, and she's dropped the *-iwau* suffix
- Then she says "I'm getting confused again" with a laugh (19:20). I moved on so we could do something more straightforward and then revisit this issue later.

**Picture 4:** A picture of a man looking at one house with two men

I revisit Picture 4 with Margaret after about ten minutes of looking at other pictures and considering other constructions (25:51).

- We try something a bit different this time. I had consider two different sentences and tell me how many possessors own the house.
- I'm not sure this helped me

1) Waapihtimwaau uwaaskaahiikinimiwaayiu

- Margaret says this sentence indicates that more than one person owns the house (26:58). So here the noun bears the plural possessor suffix as well as the obviative possessor suffix.

2) Waapihtimwaau uwaaskaahiikinimiuih

- Margaret said this sentence describes "He sees his house" (26:32), with one possessor. There is no plural suffix *-iwau* here.

I asked Margaret to consider another pair of sentences here (27:45). This is the same pair from right above, but I have added in the overt possessor modified with a demonstrative (just to see if that changes anything). The demonstrative and the

possessor noun are marked obviative, which doesn't include any information about the number of referents—could be one man or more than one man.

- 1) Waapihtimwaau aniyaah naapauh uwaaskaahiikinimiwaayiu
  - Margaret says this one indicates more than one man owns the house (28:10). That's the same as her interpretation with the previous pair.
  - But the Margaret says that this sentence could be appropriate for just one possessor (26:09). Maybe this means I'm misinterpreting the *-iwaa* as the plural possessor? Maybe it's something else?
- 2) Waapihtimwaau aniyaah naapauh uwaaskaahiikinimiyiu
  - Margaret says there is more than one possessor and one house (28:16).
  - So something about including the overt DEM + noun (which are both obviative) changes the possible interpretation from the previous #2 above.

I ask her to consider the picture (where there is clearly more than one possessor) and choose whether #1 or #2 right above feels better (30:13).

- First, Margaret says "same" (30:18) ... but then she says #2 is better (30:34) and that it better describes the situation depicted in the picture (30:47)
- She also says they're "about the same" but number two is better (31:43). We can still say number one (31:53), but number two seems clearer

**Picture 5:** A picture of a man looking at two houses with two men

I asked Margaret to consider another pair of sentences here (32:24).

- 1) Waapihtimwaau uwaaskaahiikinimiwaayiu
  - She says this one indicates more than man (owning the houses)
- 2) Waapihtimwaau uwaaskaahiikinimiyiu
  - Margaret says "this one is better"
  - She says this one indicates more than man owning houses (33:31). She explains this to "because of the -h" (33:38). So I wonder if that means she interprets the -h on the end of 'houses' as marking a property of the possessor.
  - I deleted the <h> and she confirmed that this means one man as the possessor. That really seems to indicate that Margaret interprets the final <h> on the possessee as marking a property of the possessor.

I asked Margaret to consider another pair of sentences here (34:17). This is the same pair from right above, but I have added in the overt possessor modified with a demonstrative (just to see if that changes anything). The demonstrative and the possessor noun are marked obviative, which doesn't include any information about the number of referents—could be one man or more than one man.

- 1) Waapihtimwaau aniyaah naapauh uwaaskaahiikinimiwaaiyiu

- Margaret says this example indicates more than one man. That was her immediate answer (34:46)
  - After thinking about it for #2, she says this example can also mean one or more men (35:36)
- 2) Waapihtimwaau aniyaah naapauh uwaskaahiikinimiyuh
- Margaret says number two is better (35:22)
  - She says this example indicates “one or more” men (35:13) ... “because we’re talking about the aniyaah naapauh” (35:34)
  - I end by asking her which sentence is more appropriate to describe to someone the scene depicted in the picture (36:30)—she says #2

For this next set of questions, we used different pictures where a man takes fish(es) from different possessors. The pictures are below.

**Picture 1:** A picture of a hiker taking one fish from one fisherman

Utinaau nimaash

‘He takes a fish’ (38:33)

- Here the final /h/ sounds like a geminated/lengthened [s] along with final stress

Utinaau aniyaah nimaash

‘He takes that fish’ (38:46)

Utinaau unimaasimh

‘He took his (own) fish’ (41:20, 41:50)

Utinimaau unimaasimiyuh

‘He takes his (someone else’s) fish’ (39:16)

- This one specifies that the hiker is taking the fish that belongs to someone else, the fisherman
- The morpheme /im/ appears on the verb to indicate the added participant: The possessor of the fish

Utinimaau aniyaah unimaasimiyuh

‘He takes that fish’ (39:58)

- There is ambiguity because <aniyaah> could signal the possessor ‘that one’ or it could modify ‘his fish’. I didn’t catch this ambiguity in the moment, and I didn’t ask her what <aniyaah> referred to.
- I did specifically ask for Picture 2 how to say ‘He takes those fishes’, and there <aniyaah> refers to the fishes

Utinimaau naapauh unimaasimiyuh

He takes that man’s fish (40:36)

- Here the overt possessor is used but without being specified

Utinimaau aniyaah naapauh unimaasimiyuh

He takes that man's fish (40:13)

- Here <aniyaah> clearly modifies the possessor

\*? Utinimaau naapauh aniyaah unimaasimiyuh

- I ask if we could specify the possessee when the overt possessor is present (40:50).
- Again, Margaret does not like this structure: “not good” (41:08)

**Picture 2:** One hiker takes three fishes from one fishermen. (I'm using the form “fishes” to avoid ambiguity in interpreting the number of referents)

Utinaau nimaash

‘He takes fishes’

- Here the animate noun is obviative (42:35)

Utinaau aniyaah nimaash

‘He takes those fishes’ (42:58)

Utinaau unimaasimh

‘He takes his (own) fishes’ (43:17)

- No relational morphology because there is no added possessor
- Same form as ‘He takes his (own) fish (singular)’. The recording has clear audio for comparison

Utinimaau unimaasimiyuh

‘He takes his (someone else’s) fishes’ (44:06)

- The relational morpheme /im/ appears on the verb to add the possessor, and ‘fishes’ takes the obviative possessor morpheme -yiu

Utinimaau naapauh unimaasimiyuh

‘He takes the man's fishes’ (45:00)

- Contains overt possessor

Utinimaau aniyaah naapauh unimaasimiyuh

‘He takes that man's fishes’ (44:32)

- Specifying the overt possessor

\*? Utinimaau naapauh aniyaah unimaasimiyuh

He takes a man's (those) fishes:

- I ask if we can modify ‘his fishes’ (45:17). Margaret does not like this version.



**Picture 3:** A hiker takes one fish from two fishermen

Unimaasimiwaauh

'their fish' (46:59)

- For pragmatic plausibility, the prompt posits that it's a large fish that the men can both share and eat
- Here the 'fishes' bears the plural possessor morpheme -waau and takes an obviative morpheme because it's possessed by a third-person participant 'they'
- <unimaasimiwaauh> carries final stress
- Margaret seems to indicate again that she's interpreting the final /h/ as marking plurality of the possessors. She says "you cannot say <unimaasimiwaau>" (47:29). I think the lack of final /h/ here causes a very subtle stress shift that is evident in the recording.

Utinimaau unimaasimiyuh

'He takes their fish' (47:47)

- Here we get the relational form adding the possessor 'their'
- Margaret organically and immediately did not produce the plural possessor -waau here. So it disappeared in this relational construction.
- \*unimaasimiyu**waauh**: Here I tried putting the morphemes in the order posited by Collette: obviative possessor + plural possessor. Margaret says you "cannot say" this (48:16)
- I then ask Margaret if we can use the form <Unimaasimi**waay**uh> (48:37), which uses the plural possessor morpheme in the same position as the forms like <uwaaskaahiikinimi**waay**uh> above. Margaret says "we can say that" (48:48) ... but she explicitly states that "you cannot say it alone ... it has to be in a sentence" (49:00)
- First she says <Utinimaau unimaasimi**waay**uh> is an OK form for 'He takes their fish' (49:24), but then she says "it's better with <unimaasimiyuh>" (49:37), which has no -waau: "I don't think we really say unimaasimi**waay**uh>. We can say it, but not really" (49:39)

Utinimaau aniyaah naapauh unimaasimiyuh

'He takes those men's fish(es)' (49:52)

- Here the overt possessor is modified by <aniyaah>
- Margaret clearly explained that this sentence can be interpreted as indicating one or more than one fish (50:22)
- I asked if it could also indicate one or more than one man, and she said yes (50:40)
- I asked if we could use the plural possessor morpheme on 'fish': <Utinimaau aniyaah naapauh unimaasimi**waay**uh> (51:02). Margaret responded "We can say that, yep. But the other one is better" (51:31)
- I ask which is more common, and she said <unimaasimiyuh> without the plural possessor (51:57)

\*? Utinimaau naapauh aniyaah unimaasimiyuh

- Again, when I ask if we can modify the possessee in the presence of the overt possessor, and again it doesn't work (52:16). She made a face and immediately said "no ... we don't say"

**Picture 4:** One hiker takes three fishes from two fishermen

- In these examples, Margaret's immediate productions did not include the plural possessor morpheme with 'fish(es)'

Utinimaau unimaasimiyuh

'He takes their fish(es)' (53:34)

- Margaret explains this could indicate one or more than one fish (53:54)
- Her first, immediate production did not include the plural possessor morpheme -waau, only the obviative possessor morpheme -(i)yiuh

Utinimaau naapauh unimaasimiyuh

'He takes the man's/men's fish(es)' (54:33)

- Here is an overt possessor

Utinimaau aniyaah naapauh unimaasimiyuh

'He takes those men's fishes' (54:20)

- Again no plural possessor morpheme

\*? Utinimaau naapauh aniyaah unimaasimiyuh

- I asked if we could modify the possessee in the presence of the overt possessor, and again it's no good (54:47)

\*? Utinimaau aniyaah naapauh unimaasimiwaayuh

- I asked if we could use a form with the plural possessor morpheme -waau (55:22)
- Again, "we can say it, but not really" (55:31)

Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3



Picture 4



Picture 5



ΛηΛ pitimaa (first)



---

Λιδ" aakuh (then)



ΛηΛ pitimaa (first)

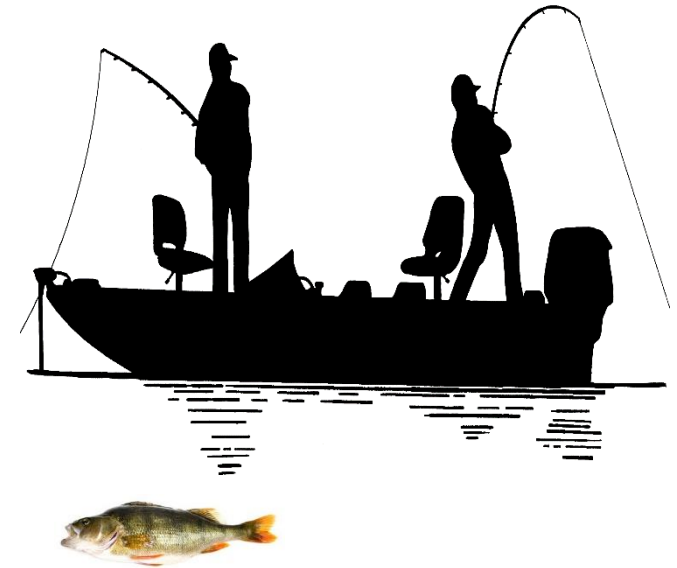


---

Λιd" aakuh (then)



ΛηΛ pitimaa (first)



---

ΛηΛ aakuh (then)





ΛηΛ pitimaa (first)



---

Λιd" aakuh (then)



